

REMARKS

Claims 1-25 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 3, 8, 18 and 22 are amended, and claims 1, 2 and 17 are canceled without prejudice or disclaimer.

Reconsideration based on the amendments and following remarks is respectfully requested.

I. Allowable Subject Matter

Applicant gratefully appreciates the indication in the Office Action that claims 5-7, 9-16 and 19-25 recite allowable subject matter.

II. Claims Define Allowable Subject Matter

The Office Action rejects claims 1-4, 8, 17 and 18 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Nakamura et al., U.S. Publication No. 2004/0145338. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

The Office Action asserts that Nakamura teaches all the currently claimed combination of features. Applicant respectfully disagrees. Specifically, claim 3 is amended to clarify that it is not the timing at which the drive circuit starts to drive the first motor, but the timing at which the electric power conversion started for driving the first motor before said timing that is different from the timing at which the voltage set-up operations performed by the voltage converter. Nakamura fails to disclose such an arrangement.

According to claim 3, even were the timing at which the first drive circuit starts to drive the first motor identical to the point of time at which the voltage of the smoothing capacitor reaches its desired level, as suggested by the Examiner, the voltage conversion by the voltage converter and the electric power conversion by the first drive circuit can be controlled independently of each other, and thus said voltage conversion and said electric power conversion are performed at respective times different from each other until said point of time is reached. Accordingly, the timing at which the power required for the voltage conversion becomes a maximum power and the timing at which the power required for the

electric conversion becomes a maximum power can be separated from each other since the element power can be prevented from being excessively drawn out from the power supply.

Claim 18 as amended requires that, after the first drive circuit stops the first motor, the voltage conversion for stepping down the voltage supplied from the first drive circuit is started. Thus, the timing at which the voltage step-down operation by the voltage converter is started is not equal to the timing at which the first drive circuit starts to drive the first motor in the regenerative mode, but after the timing at which the first motor stopped after said timing. This requirement is also satisfied by the feature that the voltage conversion by the voltage converter and the electric power conversion by the first drive circuit can be controlled independently of each other. Accordingly, the timing at which the power generated by the first motor becomes a maximum power and the timing at which the power generated through the voltage conversion becomes a maximum power can be separated from each other, so that the electric power can be prevented from being excessively supplied to the power supply.

Nakamura fails to suggest such features. Specifically, Nakamura fails to teach or suggest "said first drive circuit starts an electric power conversion for driving said first motor in powering mode after said voltage set-up operation is completed," as recited in claim 3. Moreover, Nakamura fails to teach or suggest the prior "said voltage converter starts a voltage step-down operation for stepping down a voltage supply from the first drive circuit," as recited in claim 18. Without these features among others, Nakamura cannot accommodate the advantages afforded by the currently claimed combination of features of, for example, preventing electric power from being excessively supplied to the power supply. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejections is respectfully requested.

That is, Nakamura fails to teach all the elements of the currently claimed combination of features of claims 3 and 18, and claims dependent therefrom. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

III. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



James A. Oliff
Registration No. 27,075

Richard A. Castellano
Registration No. 61,961

JAO:RAC/jth

Date: October 20, 2008

OLIFF & BERRIDGE, PLC
P.O. Box 320850
Alexandria, Virginia 22320-4850
Telephone: (703) 836-6400

<p>DEPOSIT ACCOUNT USE AUTHORIZATION Please grant any extension necessary for entry; Charge any fee due to our Deposit Account No. 15-0461</p>
--